



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 2450 E Washington Avenue
Application Type: New Multi-Family Building in Urban Design District (UDD) 5
UDC is an Approving Body
Legistar File ID #: [84250](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Travis Fauchald, Volker | Kevin Burow, Knothe & Bruce Architects

Project Description: The applicant is proposing a new five-story multi-family residential building with tuck-under parking.

Project Schedule:

- UDC received an Informational Presentation on August 14, 2024.
- The Plan Commission is scheduled to review this project at their October 21, 2024, meeting (Legistar File ID [84998](#) (Conditional Use), [84997](#) (Demolition Permit), and [85000](#) (CSM)).

Approval Standards: The UDC is an **approving body** on this request. The site is located in Urban Design District 5 ("UDD 5"), which requires that the Urban Design Commission review the proposed project using the design standards and guidelines for that district in MGO Section 33.24(12).

Adopted Plans: The City's [Comprehensive Plan](#) recommends Community Mixed Use (CMU) development for the project site. Generally, development in the CMU land use category is intended to supportive intensive development, including both commercial and residential uses. CMU areas are intended to include buildings of two to six stories in height with more residential than commercial space. Development and design within CMU areas should support walkability and be transit-oriented, well-connected to surrounding development, and surface parking should be screened from the street.

The project site is located in the [Emerson East Eken Park Yahara Neighborhood Plan](#) planning area. While the project site is not located in a Focus Area, it does include general development goals that speak to encouraging mixed-use development and a variety of housing opportunities.

Zoning Related Information: Staff notes that as part of the development proposal, the applicant will be seeking to rezone a portion of the property that is currently zoned Traditional Residential Consistent 4 (TR-C4) to Traditional Shopping Street (TSS) to maintain a consistent zone district across the site.

As a reference, the design related zoning standards for mixed use and commercial zoning districts are included as an attachment to this report, including, but not limited to those related to building entrance orientation, façade articulation, height, fenestration, and materials. Staff notes that a complete zoning analysis will be completed and that the Zoning Administrator will determine compliance with the zoning requirements. These standards are included as an appendix as a reference for the Commission.

Summary of Design Considerations

Staff recommends that the UDC provide feedback and make findings on the development proposal regarding the aforementioned standards as it relates to the design considerations noted below.

- **Building Design and Composition.** UDD 5 “Building Design” guidelines generally speak to encouraging four-sided architecture, compatibility in design and materials with adjacent structures, and minimizing large unbroken facades. Overall staff believes that the building design reflected in the application materials appears to be generally consistent with the district guidelines and requirements.

In summary, and generally, the UDC noted the following considerations as part of their Informational Presentation comments/considerations:

- Remove the ‘white’ tall parapet or the black eyebrows; consider using only one design element,
- The ‘gray’ material should return around the corner,
- On the chamfered corner consider removing the ‘white’ material from the upper floor, and
- Consideration should be given to removing the small, punched opening, and
- Revisit the rhythm of the ‘dark gray’ material, especially where it crosses the fourth-floor balconies.

Please refer to the images below for a side-by-side comparison between the Informational Presentation design and the current design of the E Washington Avenue, street frontage.



Staff requests the UDC's feedback and findings on the overall building design and composition, including as it pertains to the southwest elevation, which is a primarily blank wall for utilities.

- **Building Materials.** UDD 5 "Building Design" guidelines generally speak to materials being low maintenance and harmonious with those used on other buildings in the area. The proposed material palette is comprised of a masonry veneer, various types and colors of James Hardie composite panel and siding, and stone accents.

Staff previously raised that consideration could be given to the simplification in the composite panel selections and question whether larger/different sized panels could simplify the design. Staff requests the Commission's feedback and findings on the proposed updated building material palette.

- **Wall Packs/HVAC Louvers.** While wall pack units or louvers are not indicated on the elevation drawings, they are commonly associated with residential uses. While it has been the current practice to locate wall packs so that louvers are not on street-facing or highly visible facades, they have been approved in some cases when found to be well integrated into the façade's design, including the use of perforated metal panels to screen louvers or utilizing a louver system that is consistent with the window opening size.

Staff requests the UDC's feedback and findings on the use of wall pack systems and potential design-related considerations in the event they are used in the future.

- **Landscape and Screening.** As reflected on the site plan, there is a partially exposed surface parking lot, generator and above-ground utilities shown in the rear yard, as well as a bank of wall mounted utilities located along the southwest elevation. Consideration should be given to providing adequate screening of these items from the street, as well as the adjacent properties.

UDD 5 "Landscape" and "Off Street Parking and Loading Areas" guidelines and requirements generally speak to providing adequate screening for such uses.

As noted on the Site Plan, there is a six-foot privacy fence (wood fence on the Landscape Plan) that runs along the west property line although details of that fence were not provided and limited landscape is proposed within the southerly side yard. In addition, while the Landscape Notes indicate that both hardwood bark mulch and stone mulch will be used in designated areas, only areas of stone mulch are identified on the Landscape Plan.

Staff requests the Commission's feedback and findings related to the proposed landscape plan, especially as it relates to providing adequate year-round screening.

- **Lighting.** UDD 5 "Lighting" guidelines and requirements generally speak to providing adequate, but not excessive lighting, utilizing appropriate fixtures, mounting heights, etc. for the building and use, as well as limiting glare.

Staff notes that the lighting plan does not indicate lighting along the E Washington Avenue, street facing side of the building, the main building entrance, in either of the rooftop amenity spaces, nor architectural lighting. Staff notes, and the applicant is advised that additional lighting as noted herein, especially architectural lighting and rooftop lighting will require additional review and approval, either at the staff level or by the Commission. The lighting plan will need to be revised and fixture cutsheets will need to be provided for all proposed exterior lighting.

With regard to the materials provided, staff notes that the proposed light fixtures, especially C, D, and E, which appear to all be the same, are luminaires that are better suited as a pole mounted fixture versus a building wall mounted fixture as indicated in the luminaire schedule.

As part of the Commission's Informational Presentation, the Commission noted that fixtures tucked under the building should be cutoff in some fashion to limit their visibility and glare as viewed from the sidewalk.

Staff requests the Commission's review and recommendations related to the appropriateness of the fixtures B, C, and D for a residential application, especially as it relates to UDD 5 "Lighting" guidelines and requirements, as well as the continued review/evaluation of proposed lighting being administrative or requiring subsequent review by the Commission.

Summary of UDC Informational Presentation Discussion

As a reference, a summary of the Commission's discussion from the August 14, 2024, Informational Presentation are provided below.

Summary of Commission Discussion and Questions:

The Commission inquired about the fence along the north property line (backside of the property); the applicant noted it will be extended the full length of the property.

The Commission noted that the parking lot lighting needs to be cut-off to avoid any glare from light fixtures as viewed from the sidewalk, whether that is a louver of some other feature to limit visibility of the fixtures.

The Commission noted that the chamfered corner works nicely, but noted that the small window openings may be unnecessary. The project uses a nice economy of materials, and has a nice rhythm, with favorable reactions to the units going up a few steps right on E Washington Avenue, and how the building addresses the church across the street. It was suggested to use either the white tall parapet or black eyebrows, but not both; the gray material should return back a little bit and get your undulation that way. On the chamfered corner, the Commission noted that the white could be removed from the upper floor. The small punched openings may not be necessary. Very clean, nice design.

Commissioner Klehr inquired about the Midnight color to confirm if it was black or blue; the applicant noted it is more black than blue. The preference would be more blue due to all of the black that the Commission has seen over the course of the last year. The other part of the language that needs refinement is where the dark midnight colored elements go up and down, especially as it crosses the fourth floor balconies.

Commissioner Bernau commented that the site plan and landscaping seem pretty solid. He likes the way the project and the building hold the urban edge, anchor and engage the street, and tucks the parking behind and under it.

ATTACHMENT - 28.060 GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR MIXED-USE AND COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS.

(1) Statement of Purpose.

Mixed-use and commercial districts are established to provide a range of district types, from the small neighborhood center to regional-level retail centers, while fostering high-quality building and site design and pedestrian, bicycle and transit as well as automobile circulation.

(2) Design Standards. The following design standards are applicable after the effective date of this code to all new buildings and major expansions (fifty percent (50%) or more of building floor area). Design standards shall apply only to the portion of the building or site that is undergoing alteration.



Figure D1: Entrance Orientation

- (a) Entrance Orientation (See Figure D1). All new buildings shall have a functional entrance oriented to an abutting public street. Additional entrances may be oriented to a private street or parking area. For buildings with multiple non-residential tenants, a minimum of one (1) tenant space shall have a functional entrance oriented towards an abutting public street. Other tenant spaces shall be connected to the public street with a private sidewalk connection. Entries shall be clearly visible and identifiable from the street, and delineated with elements such as roof overhangs, recessed entries, landscaping, or similar design features. Barrier-free entrances are encouraged. (Am. by ORD-13-00113, 6-26-13)

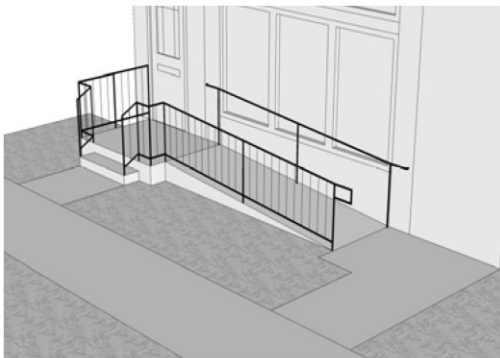


Figure D2: Barrier-Free Entrance Example

- (b) Facade Articulation. Consistent with the design of traditional storefront buildings, new buildings of more than forty (40) feet in width shall be divided into smaller increments, through articulation of the facade. This can be achieved through combinations of including but not limited to the following:
1. Facade Modulation (See Figure D3). Stepping back or extending forward a portion of the facade.
 2. Vertical divisions using different textures or materials (although materials shall be drawn from a common palette).
 3. Division into storefronts, with separate display windows and entrances.



Figure D3: Facade Modulation

4. Variation in roof lines by alternating dormers, stepped roofs, gables, or other roof elements to reinforce the modulation or articulation interval (See Figure D4).
5. Arcades, awnings, and window bays at intervals equal to the articulation interval.

(c) Design of Street-Facing Facades.

No blank walls shall be permitted to face the public street, sidewalks, or other public spaces such as plazas. Elements such as windows, doors, columns, changes in material, and similar details shall be used to add visual interest.



Figure D4: Variation in Roof Lines

- (d) Door and/or Window Openings. For nonresidential uses at ground floor level, windows and doors or other openings shall comprise at least sixty percent (60%) of the length and at least forty percent (40%) of the area of the ground floor of the primary street facade. At least fifty percent (50%) of windows on the primary street facade shall have the lower sill within three (3) feet of grade.

For residential uses at ground level, a minimum of fifteen percent (15%) of the ground level of residential facades or side and rear facades not fronting a public street shall consist of windows and door openings. On upper stories, window or balcony openings shall occupy a minimum of fifteen percent (15%) of the upper-story wall area.

1. Glass on windows and doors shall be clear or slightly tinted, allowing views into and out of the interior. Spandrel glass that mimics the appearance of windows may be used for up to twenty percent (20%) of the required area of the openings. (Am. by ORD-13-00205, 12-10-13)
2. Displays may be placed within windows. Equipment within buildings shall be placed a minimum of five (5) feet behind windows. To preserve views, within three (3) feet of any window, not more than thirty percent (30%) of the view through the windows shall be blocked by merchandise, displays, shelving, or other obstructions.
3. Window shape, size and patterns shall emphasize the intended organization of the facade and the definition of the building.

- (e) Equipment and Service Area Screening. If an outdoor storage, service or loading area is visible from adjacent residential uses or an abutting public street or public walkway, it shall be screened by a

decorative fence, wall or screen of plant material at least six (6) feet in height. Fences and walls shall be architecturally compatible with the primary structure.

- (f) Screening of Rooftop Equipment. All rooftop equipment, with the exception of solar and wind equipment, shall be screened from view from adjacent streets and public rights-of-way. Rooftop equipment shall be screened from view from adjacent buildings to the extent possible.
 - 1. The equipment shall be within an enclosure. This structure shall be set back a distance of one and one-half (1½) times its height from any primary facade fronting a public street.
 - a. Screens shall be of durable, permanent materials (not including wood) that are compatible with the primary building materials.
 - b. Screening shall be constructed to a height of at least one (1) foot above the height of the equipment.
 - 2. Exterior mechanical equipment such as ductwork shall not be located on primary building facades.
- (g) Materials. Nonresidential or mixed-use buildings shall be constructed of durable, high-quality materials such as brick, stone, textured cast stone, or tinted masonry units. Table 28D-1 below lists allowable building materials. When applying these requirements, consideration shall be given to the use, amount, placement and relationship of each material as part of a comprehensive palette of building materials. All building facades visible from a public street or public walkway should employ materials and design features similar to or complementary to those of the front facade.

Table 28D-1.

Building Materials	Allowable for use as/at:				Standards (see footnotes)
	Trim/Accent Material	Top of Building	Middle of Building	Base/Bottom of Building	
Brick (Face/Veneer)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Smooth-Face/Split-Face Block	✓	✓	✓	✓	A
Wood/ Wood Composite	✓	✓	✓		
Fiber-Cement Siding/Panels	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Concrete Panels, Tilt-up or Precast	✓	✓	✓	✓	B
EIFS/Synthetic Stucco	✓	✓			C
Stone/Stone Veneer	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Metal Panels	✓	✓	✓	✓	D
Hand-Laid Stucco	✓	✓			C
Vinyl Siding	✓				E
Glass Curtain Wall System	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Reflective Glass/Spandrel	✓				F
Glass (Storefront)	✓	✓	✓	✓	

A - Shall be used in conjunction with a palette of materials and shall not comprise more than 33% of any building wall adjacent to a public street or walkway.

B - Shall incorporate horizontal and vertical articulation and modulation, including but not limited to changes in color and texture, or as part of a palette of materials.

C - Shall not be within three feet of the ground or used in heavily trafficked pedestrian areas or where high pedestrian traffic is anticipated.

D - Shall be used in conjunction with a palette of materials; shall be a heavy gauge metal, and; shall be non-reflective.

E - Shall be used in limited quantities due to its limited durability.

F - Shall be used in limited quantities as an accent material.



Figure D5: Compatibility with Traditional Buildings

- (h) Compatibility with Traditional Buildings. (See Figure D5.) New development shall relate to the design of traditional buildings adjacent to the site, where present, in scale and character. This can be achieved by maintaining similar, facade divisions, roof lines, rhythm and proportions of openings, building materials and colors. Historic architectural styles need not be replicated.



Figure D6: Building Alignment

- (i) Building Alignment. (See Figure D6.) Buildings shall be aligned with facades parallel with the street to create a well-defined street edge.
- (j) Building Articulation. (See Figure D7.) Buildings shall have horizontal and vertical articulation, which may include dormers, cornice detailing, recesses and projections, stepbacks of upper stories, changes in roof types and planes, building materials, and window patterns. The base of the building shall relate to the human scale, including doors and windows, texture, projections, awnings, canopies, and similar features.



Figure D7: Building Articulation

- (k) Ground-Floor Residential Uses. (See Figure D8.) Ground-floor residential uses fronting a public street or walkway, where present, shall be separated from the street by landscaping, steps, porches, grade changes, and low ornamental fences or walls in order to create a private yard area between the sidewalk and the front door.



Figure D8: Ground Floor Residential Uses